

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 19014 261208Z  
ACTION DHA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00  
INSE-00 DODE-00 SY-05 DEAE-00 AID-05 SP-02 SS-15  
NSC-05 EUR-12 PA-01 PRS-01 /079 W  
-----069052 261323Z /43

R 261032Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5552  
INFO USMISSION GENEVA  
AMCONSUL UDORN  
AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L 19014

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SREF, TH  
SUBJECT: LOCAL SETTLEMENT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND

1. FOLLOWING IS A COMPOSIT OF THAI AND UNHCR VIEWS ON THE POSSIBILITIES OF LOCAL SETTLEMENT IN THAILAND OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES. THESE THOUGHTS PROCEEDED FROM CONVERSATIONS DURING THE LAST THREE DAYS WHILE INTRODUCING BARNE TO DAMRONG SUNTHON SARATHUN, DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY OF INTERIOR; COL. KAMON PRACHUAPMO, DIRECTOR OF THE DISPLACED PERSONS CENTER AT THE INTERIOR: AND CESAR BERTA, LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNHCR, AND HIS STAFF.

2. THAI VIEWPOINTS: THE REFUGEE INFLOW, PRINCIPALLY FROM LAOS, MUST COME TO A HALT; THUS THE RECENT AGREEMENT TO LABEL MOST FUTURE INCOMING REFUGEES AS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS UNLESS THEY CAN PROVE DIRE POLITICAL DISTRESS IN THEIR HOMELAND. WHILE THE LAO ARE RELATIVELY ASSIMILABLE, THERE IS PROGRESSIVELY LESS POSSIBILITY OF ABSORBING CAMBODIANS, AND ABOVE ALL VIETNAMESE INTO THE SOCIETY. AS COUNTRIES OF TRADITIONAL IMMIGRATION INCREASINGLY FOLLOW THE AMERICAN, FRENCH AND AUSTRALIAN EXAMPLE OF TAKING IN REFUGEES, THE THAI RELUCTANTLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THEY WILL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 19014 261208Z

HAVE TO DO THEIR PART BY LOCALLY SETTLING A GROUP OF THEM PERHAPS 30,000. FOR THE TIME BEING HOWEVER THAILAND'S PRIORITY IS TO STOP THE INFLOW AND AWAIT FURTHER DEPARTURES. LOCAL SETTLEMENT IS NOT A CURRENT PROSPECT.

3. BERTA AND HIS STAFF LAMENTED OUR NOT HAVING USED THE PAROLE AS A QUID PRO QUO FOR A THAI COMMITMENT TO LOCALLY SETTLE

REFUGEES. ASKED ABOUT THEIR VIEWS ON APPEALS TO COUNTRIES OF TRADITIONAL IMMIGRATION TO ESTABLISH FIXED QUOTAS FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES, BERTA AND HIS STAFF WERE NEGATIVE. THE UNHCR HIMSELF WOULD NOT THINK MUCH OF THE IDEA EITHER.

4. THEY ALSO SAID THAT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ARE LIKELY TO BE PROGRESSIVELY LESS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT MAKING MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PERPETUAL UPKEEP OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND. MONEY FOR THAT PURPOSE JUST GOES DOWN THE DRAIN. THE TIME HAS TO COME FOR SOME SORT OF LOCAL SETTLEMENT THE COST OF WHICH WOULD BE MODEST, NOT TO EXCEED \$110 PERCAPITA IN DIRECT COSTS. THE THAI MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE WILLING TO LOCALLY SETTLE AS MANY AS 50,000 REFUGEES, BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN THEY WERE WILLING TO BEGIN NOW. IN FACT, THE RECENT COMMITMENTS BY THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT FURTHER REFUGEES MAY HAVE ENCOURAGED THE THAI TO PERSIST IN THEIR SO FAR CLOSED ATTITUDE TOWARD LOCAL SETTLEMENT.

5. RATHER THAN APPROACH COUNTRIES TO TAKE IN FIXED QUOTAS OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES, BERTA CONTENDS THAT SPECIAL APPEALS ARE MORE FEASIBLE. HE CITED HIS SUCCESS IN GETTING GREAT BRITAIN TO TAKE IN 25 ILLITERATE CAMBODIAN FISHERMEN. HE PARTICULARLY RECOMMENDS MAKING SPECIAL APPEALS FOR WHAT HE CLAIMS WILL EVENTUALLY BE SOME 1600 VIETNAMESE AT THE SI KHIU  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 19014 261208Z

CAMP IN KORAT.

6. DERTA BROUGHT UP WHAT IS NOW HIS WELL KNOWN STANCE ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REFUGEES, CONTENDING THAT THE FORMER WERE LESS DESERVING. WE COUNTERED THAT WE SAW LITTLE USEFULNESS OR VALIDITY IN DISTINGUISHING ECONOMIC FROM POLITICAL REFUGEES. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SENDING REFUGEES BACK HOME WAS NOT PRUDENT AND CAMBODIAN WAS OUT OF THE QUESTIN.

7. WE MENTIONED TO BOTH THE THAI AND BERTA THAT RECOGNIZING THAT VIETNAMESE HAVE SCANT PROSPECT OF ACCEPTANCE INTO THAI SOCIETY, WE WOULD MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO TAKE REFUGEES FROM THE SI KHIU CAMP. WE WOULD ALS ENCOURAGE OUR AUSTRALIAN AND FRENCH CONTACTS IN BANGKOK TO DO LIKEWISE. WE ALSO SAID THAT WE WILL BE DOING A MORE THOROUGH SCREENING OF THE HMONG IN NORTH THAILAND THAN DURING THE EXPANDED PAROLE PROGRAM AND WOULD THREFORE ATTEMPT TO HELP OUT THE THAI IN LESSENING THAT BURDEN.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: IF YOU SHARE OUR SUPPORT FOR BERTA'S SUGGESTION FOR A SPECIAL APPEAL, PARTICULARLY TO TAKE THE

VIETNAMESE REFUGEES OUT OF SI KHIU, AND SOME HMONG FROM OTHER CAMPS, YOU MAY WISH TO FOLLOW UP THROUGH THE US MISSION IN GENEVA WITHOUT ATTRIBUTION TO BERTA AS THE GENESIS OF THE IDEA. THROUGH PROGRESS IN REDUCING THAI CONCERNS ABOUT THE SI KHIU CAMP, THEY MIGHT BECOME MORE CONDUCIVE TO DISCUSSION OF GENERAL LOCAL SETTLEMENT.

O'DONOHUE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 26-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977BANGKO19014  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770309-0489  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** BANGKOK  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770821/aaaaaquc.tel  
**Line Count:** 123  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** e780e852-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION DHA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 1478551  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** LOCAL SETTLEMENT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND  
**TAGS:** SREF, TH  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkvgwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/e780e852-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009